Cotton/Soybean Insect Newsletter

Volume 15, Issue #3 Edisto Research & Education Center in Blackville, SC 22 May 2020

Pest Patrol Alerts

The information contained herein each week is available via text alerts that direct users to online recordings. I will update the short message weekly for at least as long as the newsletter runs. After a new message is posted, a text message is sent to alert users that I have recorded a new update. Users can subscribe for text message alerts for my updates in two easy steps. Step one: register by texting **pestpat7** to 97063. Step two: reply to the confirmation text you receive by texting the letter "y" to complete your registration. Pest Patrol Alerts are sponsored by Syngenta.

Updates on Twitter

When noteworthy events happen the in the field, I will be sending them out quickly via Twitter. If you want to follow those quick updates, follow me at @bugdocisin on Twitter.

News from Around the State

Jonathan Croft, county agent covering Orangeburg, Berkeley, and Dorchester Counties, reported that he has heard of "no complaints" in his area right now, and they are "just thankful for the rain." **Charles Davis**, county agent covering Calhoun and Richland Counties, reported "all is fairly quiet in Calhoun County. Cotton planting picking back up after the dry spell slowed us down. I have seen light thrips damage and plenty of hoppers. I imagine the rain will boost the hopper emergence." **Hannah Mikell** and **Jay Crouch**, county agents covering Clarendon and Newberry, Edgefield, and Saluda Counties, respectively, reported no problems with insects in their areas so far. **William Hardee**, county agent covering Dillon, Horry, and Marion Counties, reported that he is "seeing some grasshoppers on corn that could be an issue for newly emerging soybean and cotton seedlings. Other than that, we are in pretty good shape. The rain has been good for thrips pressure."

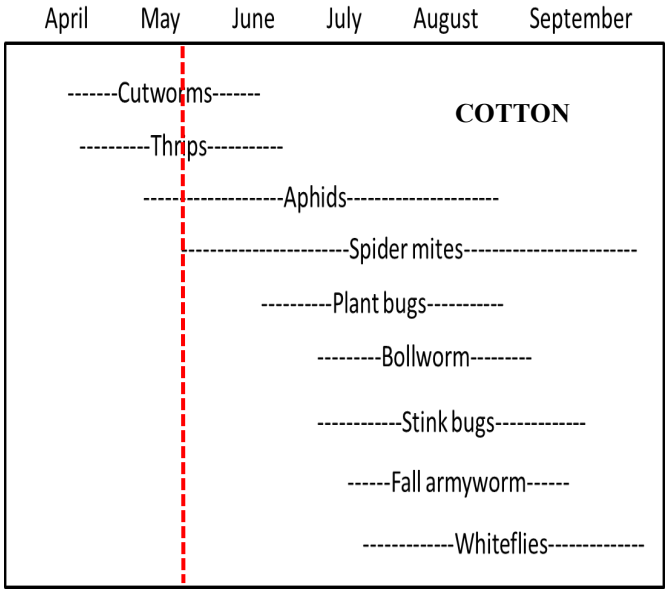
Have a Minute for a Short Survey?

This section of the newsletter will contain a survey link and report back on survey results. The questions this week pertain to management options for thrips in cotton for this season only – 2020. So, if you grow cotton or manage insects in the crop, please click on the link below and answer the short survey (takes only a minute or two), if you have time. It would be much appreciated. This survey will be active for 1 week. I will report the results back here, if enough folks complete the survey (providing meaningful results to summarize). Thanks!
https://clemson.ca1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bPHK06s59kqHHzT

Cotton Situation

As of 17 May 2020, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office estimated that about 45% of the crop has been planted, compared with 23% at this time last week, 58% at this time last year, and 55% for the 5-year average. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages. The condition of the crop was not yet described. The recent rain and warmer temperatures should help the crop considerably.

Cotton Insects



Well, we received some much needed rainfall this week in the southern half of the state. Hopefully, everyone in SC has good moisture now and can find some windows of opportunity to get the remainder of the crop planted during what is left of May. Thrips, grasshoppers, and false chinch bugs remain the most pressing issues with insects in cotton right now, probably in that order. Injury from thrips has been moderate to heavy in my research plots so far this season. On an injury rating scale of 0 to 5, with '0' indicating no injury and '5' indicating dead plants, I have hit '4' in UTC plots this week, with a range between 0.5 and 4 across various treatments. Numbers of thrips are not as high as last year, but the cold weather we had recently made for a slow-growing crop that just stood there and took it on injury during the most susceptible stages (1 to 3 leaves). There is more variability in treatments this year, and I hope to summarize some of the data soon. It looks like the seed treatments were definitely weaker than products put in the furrow with the seed, but they were still much better than nothing (UTC). Plots treated with aldicarb (AgLogic) continue to look the best right now (4 leaf stage). Here is a photo (yesterday) of Cruiser (thiamethoxam) seed treatment (left) compared with aldicarb (AgLogic at 5 lb/acre) (right).

I learned a valuable lesson this year about timing of burndown herbicides and planting. We tried to make it work too close together and paid the price for it with untreated seed in a foliar spray trial for thrips. I was able to rate plots for thrips injury early on, but falsh chinch bugs (FCB), along with thrips, eventually killed plants in the untreated control plots (no at-plant insecticide). Plots in a trial adjacent to this test that had at-plant treatments for thrips did just fine against FCB, so be aware that if your at-plant treatment doesn't go out, and you burndown close to planting, you are at serious risk for insect injury.

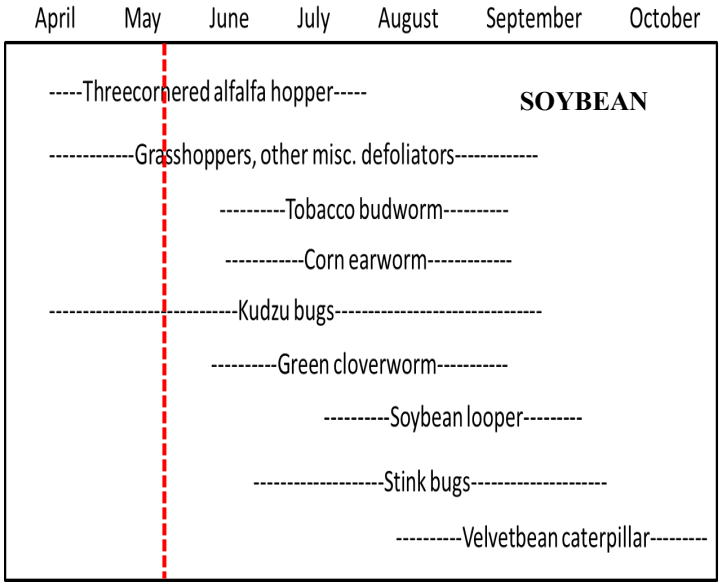
Grasshoppers are still an issue. I saw a ton of immatures jumping around from plant to plant this morning. For problems with grasshoppers, see the newsletter from two weeks ago. Use a high grasshopper rate of acephate (Orthene) for adults and the insect growth regulator (IGR) Dimilin (2 fl oz/acre) for keeping the nymphs from becoming adults. This IGR is great for grasshoppers.

Soybean Situation

As of 17 May 2020, the USDA NASS South Carolina Statistical Office estimated that about 21% of the crop has been planted, compared with 10% the previous week, 14% at this time last year, and 10% for the 5-year average. The condition of the crop was not yet described, but the majority of the crop has not yet been planted. These are observed/perceived state-wide averages.

Soybean Insects

There is still not a lot of activity with insects in soybeans, other than grasshoppers being reported in some locations. No arthropods seem to be causing any issues in early planted soybeans I have in a planting date study at Edisto REC. For grasshoppers that continue to be an issue in spots in both cotton and soybean, consider using Dimilin at 2 fl oz/acre to control the immatures and break the life cycle. For controlling grasshopper adults, we recommend acephate (Orthene) for adult grasshoppers in cotton, so you can also control tobacco thrips, but, in soybeans, use a high rate of a pyrethroid for some suppression of the adults that are difficult to control and Dimilin at 2 fl oz/acre for the immatures.



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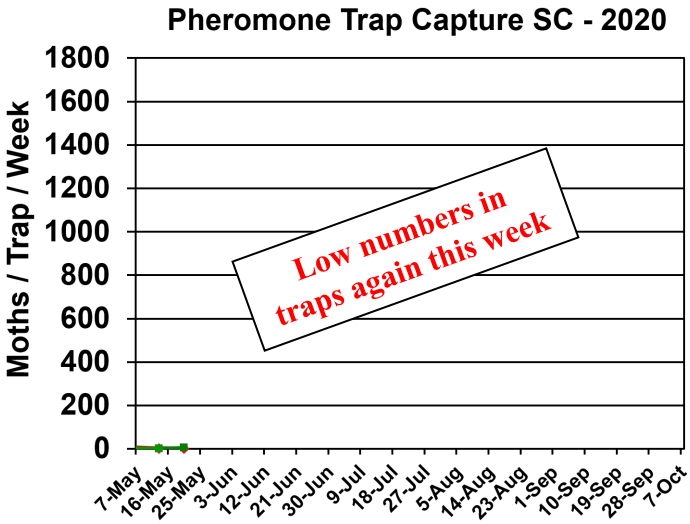
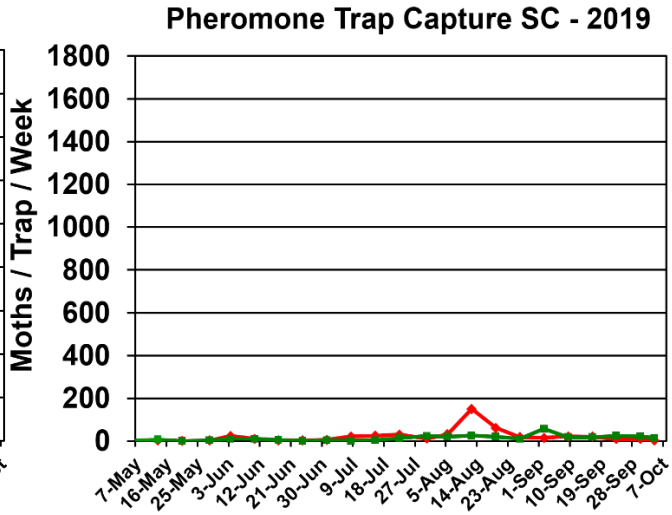
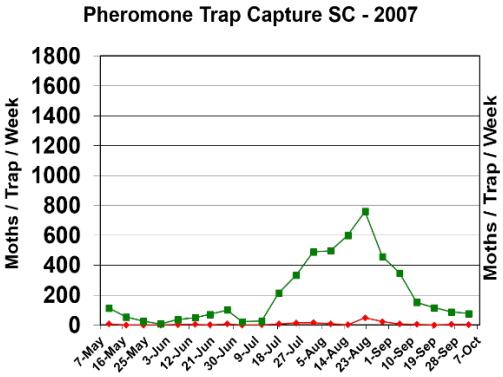
Bollworm & Tobacco Budworm

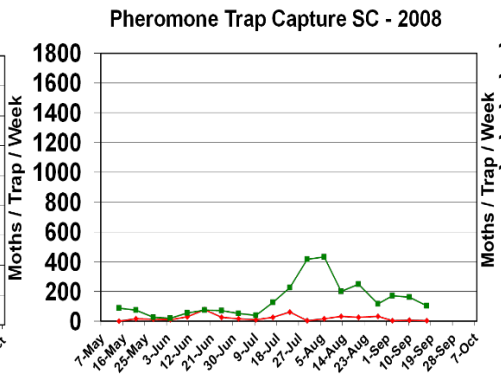
Captures of bollworm (BW) and tobacco budworm (TBW) moths in pheromone traps at EREC this season are shown below, as are the captures from 2007-2019 for reference. Tobacco budworm continues to be important for our soybean acres and for any acres of non-Bt cotton. I provide these data as a measure of moth presence and activity in our local area near my research plots. The numbers are not necessarily representative of the species throughout the state.

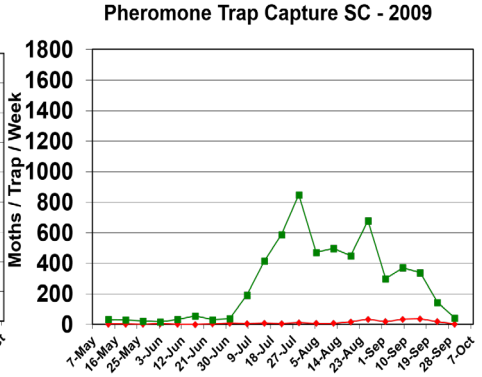


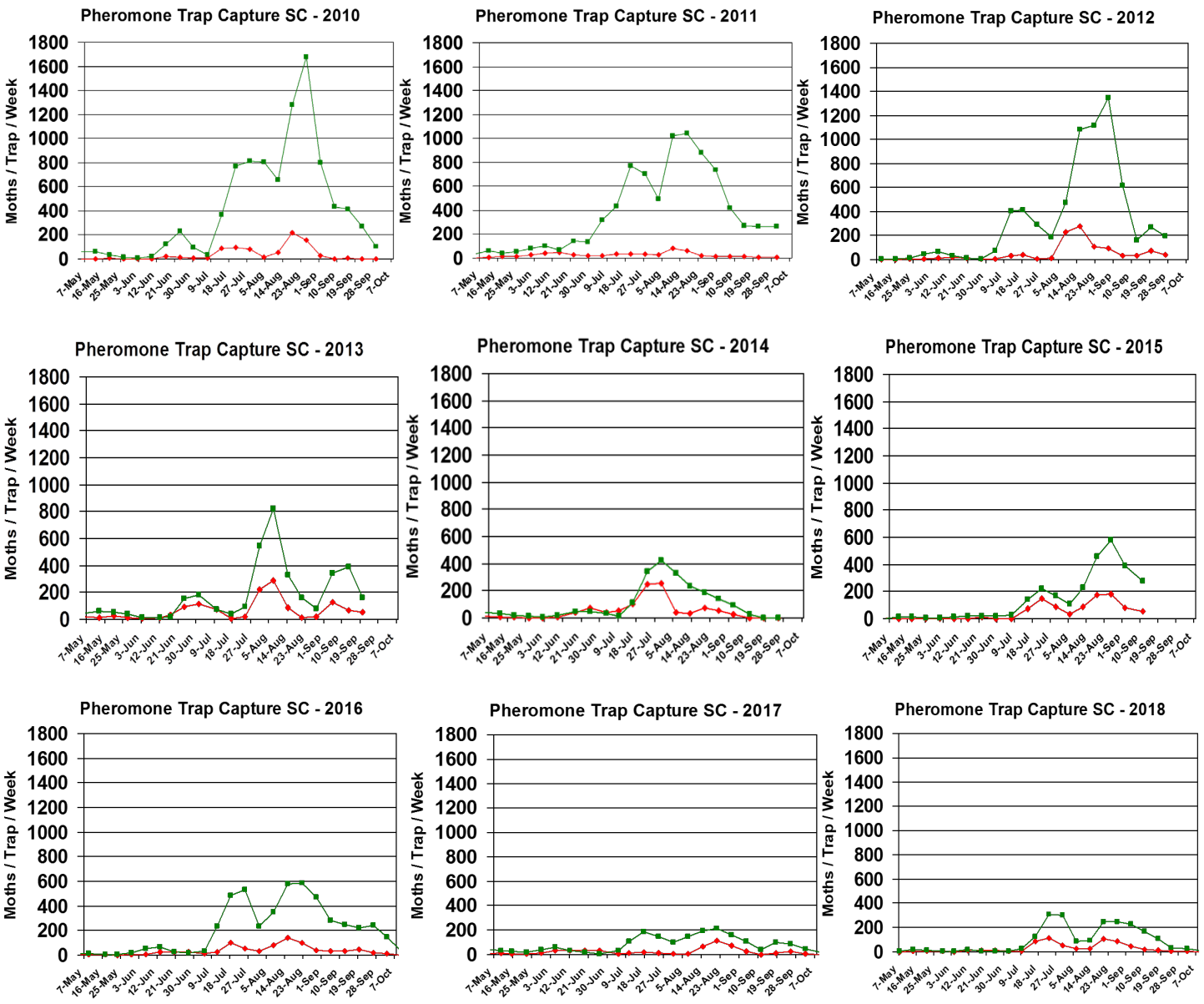


Trap data from 2007-2018 are shown below for reference to other years of trapping data from EREC:





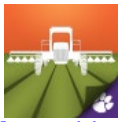




Pest Management Handbook – 2020

Insect control recommendations are available online in the 2020 South Carolina Pest Management Handbook at:
https://www.clemson.edu/extension/agronomy/pest%20management%20handbook.html

Free Mobile Apps: "Calibrate My Sprayer" and "Mix My Sprayer"



Download our free mobile apps called "Calibrate My Sprayer" and "Mix My Sprayer" that help check for proper calibration of spraying equipment and help you with mixing user-defined pesticides, respectively, in custom units (available in both iOS and Android formats):
http://www.clemson.edu/extension/mobile-apps/

Need More Information?

For more Clemson University Extension information: http://www.clemson.edu/extension/

For historical cotton/soybean insect newsletters:
https://www.clemson.edu/extension/agronomy/cotton1/newsletters.html

Sincerely,

Jeremy K. Greene, Ph.D.
Professor of Entomology

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http://www.clemson.edu